

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 SCCT-02 ACDA-19 IO-14 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 SAB-01

DRC-01 /126 W

----- 095995

R 141329Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1854

INFO USINT DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1527

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, SY

SUBJ: REACTION IN ISRAEL TO MURDER OF SYRIAN JEWS

REF: DAMASCUS 208, TEL AVIV 1389

1. INITIALLY, IT SEEMED THAT REPORTED MURDER OF FOUR SYRIAN JEWISH WOMEN WOULD NOT ATTRACT TOO MUCH ATTENTION IN ISRAEL, GIVEN IMMEDIATE PREOCCUPATION OF ISRAELIS WITH LOCAL RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY LAST WEEKEND AS WELL AS PRESENTATION OF MRS MEIR'S NEW CABINET BEFORE KNESSET MARCH 10. IN PAST FEW DAYS, HOWEVER, INCIDENT HAS GENERATED CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC FUROR INCLUDING PRESS AND RADIO COVERAGE OF MUTILATION OF BODIES. DEMONSTRATION BY 1000 ISRAELIS PROTESTING THE MURDERS WAS HELD MARCH 13 IN JERUSALEM. ANOTHER PROTEST, AS WELL AS A MEMORIAL CEREMONY, IS SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN TEL AVIV MARCH 14.

2. IN ADDITION TO ABOVE, SOME NEWSPAPERS HAVE BEGUN TO URGE THAT ISRAEL LINK FATE OF SYRIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY TO DISENGAGEMENT TALKS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND SYRIA. EDITORIAL IN TODAY'S DAVAR STATED THAT THE MURDERS " ADD A NEW DIMENSION TO THE DISENGAGEMENT TALKS" AND " TRANSFORM THE SITUATION OF THE REMAINING JEWS IN SYRIA TO A MATTER OF THE HIGHEST URGENCY WHEN ISRAEL CARRIES
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OUT POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA."

3. COMMENT. WE WOULD NOT BE AT ALL SUPRISED TO SEE
OPPOSITION BLOC LIKUD REQUEST URGENT DEBATE IN KNESSET ON FATE
OF SYRIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY. IF KNESSET DEBATE DOES INDEED
TAKE PLACE THERE WILL NO DOUBT BE SOME KNESSET MEMBERS WHO
WILL CALL FOR INTRODUCTION OF THIS SUBJECT INTO NEGOTIATIONS ON
DISENGAGEMENT.
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